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East Europe Report

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

(FOUO 7/82)



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ALBANIA

PARIS JOURNAL REPORTS ON RELIGION IN ALBANIA

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 13 Jan 82 pp 53-58

[Article by Michel Sidhom: "The Country Which Drove Out Islam"]

[Text] Albania is never talked about. Or almost never. It took the suicide of a prime minister--Mehmet Shehu, on Friday, 18 December--to make people recall that Enver Hoxha's country did exist. However, Albania is of interest to us. Because there God and Muhammad have disappeared before the socialist ethic, and all the mosques, all the places of worship have been closed. How did the communists manage to stamp out Islam? Michel Sidhom investigated on location.

I wanted to visit Albania, the only country which claims to be atheist and declares it has conquered Islam. Albania, the last pure and hard Marxist-Leninist, firmly Stalinist country, does not allow individual tourists within its territory, and only grants visas to groups. I took my wife, Annick, and our baby, William, to make a good impression.

Albania has succeeded in a "tour de force" never before seen. Since the 15th century, this had been the only country in Europe with a Muslim majority. After invading the territory, the Ottomans converted the population to Islam with amazing rapidity. How? By claiming only half as much in taxes from declared Muslims. Five centuries later, just before the communist takeover in 1944, two-thirds of the Albanians were still praying to Allah. Only 10 percent were Catholic, and 20 percent Orthodox. Today, the Albanian Communist Party [as published] and its revered leader Enver Hoxha, last of the great postwar political dinosaurs, affirm that Islam has been more or less eradicated in the country, except for some older incorrigible citizens.

Propaganda? Perhaps not. No "samizdat" is circulated, no religious opposition is holding out in Albania. In other Eastern European countries the stubborn faithful can at least go to church. In Albania, all the mosques, all the places of worship have been closed. It had to be done. The shah of Iran, who did not hesitate to throw the mullahs in jail, lost his crown. The Soviet Union is at a loss before its Azerbaydzhan Muslims.

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How did the Albanian communists manage to stamp out Islam? You won't get me to believe that religion disappeared without a fight, that Islam didn't wage a holy war. The great religions have survived centuries of persecution; I must persist.

But it is not easy. We are staying at the beach, some distance from the capital, Tirana. Yesterday we went on a short tour of Tirana. What an austere city for a southern capital. Everyone goes home to bed at 10 o'clock at night. The "ecolos" should go on tour to Tirana. No cars except the long black Mercedes of the great leaders. The Albanians travel on foot and bicycle, by bus and truck. All the stores display the same basic commodities, one kind of bread, five kinds of canned products, standardized clothing; but they are well-stocked. Socialist Albania keeps its promises: It feeds its people while remaining fiercely independent. No country in the world gives it assistance since it became angry with the USSR and China, which it considered "revisionist."

On all the street corners, in every field, rise small mushroom-shaped block-houses; these are the shelters where the citizens are to take refuge in case of war with Yugoslavia. Someone close to Enver Hoxha explained the strategic importance of these concrete mushrooms to me: The people will rush to them to fire on the enemy through the loopholes while the Albanian Air Force will mercilessly strafe the invaded land.

Today, I saw hope: After our visit to the Korca engineering plant, we were finally to visit the Museum of Atheism in Shkoder. The curator looks like Voltaire: deep-set and evil eyes. We passed through the door of the first room under the inevitable quotation from Karl Marx standing out against a pale blue background: "Religion is the opium of the people." The Museum of Atheism isn't much to look at. The first room displays several mounted photographs of old mosques accompanied by numerous captions in Albanian. Only two posters stand out in this scholarly exhibit: two portraits of young women who have been blinded, one by a crucifix, the other by a minaret. Voltaire clears his throat and begins his explanations: "Take Darwin's phrase: 'Religion is the daughter of ignorance.' He was right. Muhammad claims that the earth is flat and is supported by a woman; the woman is on the head of an ox, the ox on a fish. The fish on the sea. And the sea on infinity." The curator makes the most of it. The whole group bursts out laughing. He continues in the same mocking tone. "Here are prints of the great massacres carried out by Christians: the Saint Bartholomew massacre, the Inquisition. Here is a drawing of Galileo in prison. There, Voltaire's words: 'In each century, religion has cost humanity a million lives.'"

In the second room, there are several caricatures of priests. In a large display case is a striking wax mannequin draped in red with a serious face, his side ripped open: "Here is Saint Prosper, a Spanish martyr priest assassinated by the Moors. The Church was saying that his body remained intact. Catholics were paying to go see it in the Shkoder cathedral. When we closed the church, look what we found: a mannequin stuffed with straw, ah hah!" With exaggerated gestures, the curator reminds us of a mass of Catholic disgraces: Albanian curates collaborated with the Italian Fascists,

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the Pope blessed Mussolini and Cardinal Spellman the American soldiers in Vietnam, the Poles are tearing themselves apart. A true socialist country must eliminate the Church. What an actor! He flies into a rage against the hypocritical priests who defrock themselves and play the guitar to better attract the youth.

"In 1937, there were 144 churches and mosques in the Shkoder district, just 34 schools and just 1 hospital. Today there are 357 schools and 408 health centers."

"That's all very well, but there must be sly reminders of Islam. Old people who pray in secret, peasants who observe Ramadan..."

"The ideological struggle continues. We must watch the former priests to see that they do not organize clandestine ceremonies, and the old people to see that they do not pass on superstitions to their grandchildren. Foreign groups flood us with brochures by the sea and the lakes. The best activists themselves must remain vigilant. Comrade Enver Hoxha says that you must cleanse your conscience every morning."

Ah hah! I have opened the door. I press on: "Are these vestiges punished? What do you do if you discover a circumcised child?"

"Those responsible risk 2 to 3 years in prison."

"How many mosques are left?"

"All religious edifices in good condition have been converted into public buildings. The Shkoder cathedral is a sports arena; the Franciscan church, a movie theater. Some have been preserved for their architectural value. Others have been razed."

I want to spot the minute vestiges of religion. I persuade Natalie, the only fun girl in the group, that she wants to go with me on an expedition through the streets of Shkoder to look for old mosques. We go into the streets of the old city which, as in Southern Italy, wind among low tile-roofed houses.

How do you identify a mosque from a distance? All the minarets were torn down long ago. We are going in circles before we come across a dilapidated building with oval windows. We approach the openings; the inside is destroyed, full of rubble. A couple of old Albanians pass by. Natalie calls to them and pretends to bow down. Then she points to the building. The two passersby grimace, say "Pshaw, pshaw, Yes, yes," while shaking their heads and then take off at full speed. Interesting. This ruin must be a mosque then. We approach a young woman to confirm it. She strides away. A third person stops, a 40-year-old guy, with plenty of go. He makes us a sign to follow him. Perhaps he is taking us to some secret ceremony? Five minutes later, I am singing a different tune. The guy has taken us to the cops. He jabbars with the policeman on duty for 30 seconds. This time, I see the mess coming. The policeman barks out three sentences and points to us. The passerby takes me by the arm and we leave again. He doesn't let go of me

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until we are at the hotel. That evening, I am a little dejected. How can I find out whether Islam is still practiced today, if I cannot take one step without the group? And then, I still do not understand how the Albanian Communist Party managed to liquidate the religions. I decide to persevere; if I keep asking questions, someone will end up giving in.

"Enver Hoxha, Enver Hoxha!" Three hundred 10-year-old young pioneers chant the name of their honored leader to welcome us to the beach at Durres. These young communist scouts march to the bugle. One blast! They rush to the water. Another blast! They get out. A bust of Enver Hoxha occupies the place of honor like an altar in the camp's big assembly hall. A little farther down, another group of French tourists settles itself on the beach; their young guide has a cup of coffee at the hotel while waiting for the end of their swim. As he doesn't have Dritta's saintly appearance, I approach him with a smile. I begin by citing a 1949 speech in which Enver Hoxha gave assurance that he would never destroy the mosques.

What has happened since this statement? "Everything changed in 1967," explained the young guide, "with a new statement on religion from Enver Hoxha."

I finally manage to reconstruct the major stages of this scuffle. After the communist takeover in 1944, Enver Hoxha and the Albanian Communist Party did not attack directly. They put the hodjas and curates on salary and preserved the mosques and churches to avoid reaction by the people. But, at the same time, Enver Hoxha had all the religious schools closed. It was a delayed blow: No new priests were ordained, religious education disappeared. It sufficed to wait until the old priests died; no one would be able to replace them. Of course, the priests complained. But they found little public support because officially the religions were tolerated and the clergy paid.

Day after day, the press and radio harped on the parasites who lived off of public funds and did not work. But that didn't carry it through. Then, in 1967, a change in strategy. Dialectic materialism has had enough of superstition. Enver Hoxha revives the struggle against religion. Bands of youths invade the mosques, close them or occupy them. What becomes of the priests? The young guide remains vague. He remembers the curate in his neighborhood: Today he is a warehouse watchman. To hear him tell it, the movement did not arouse great resistance. As for the indomitable faithful, apparently they did not react. I badger the guide to give me some examples.

"It happened in Durres. An old Muslim was praying at home each evening. One day the Youth Union kids went to his home blowing bugles."

I imagine that this type of scene must have taken place more or less everywhere: The young communists ridiculed the believers and the devout until they renounced public practice. The young guide also tells me the twisted story of a hodja who was shot for being an accomplice in a burglary. There were executions, then. Others were sent to penitentiaries or the mines. But this period remained obscure until 1976 when Albania revived with a new

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constitution. The 1976 Constitution permanently prohibited any religious propaganda.

We are far from the transition period when the state came to terms with the obedient priests, the ones who agreed to declare: "God bless and bring together all the peoples of the earth around the single party of peace led by the glorious Soviet Union and Stalin's spirit."

The socialist ethic slid into bed with religion first, before strangling it. Take the places of worship. The Shkoder cathedral has become a sports arena. I saw young Albanians there training for basketball under a big banner proclaiming "Glory to Marxism-Leninism." I gather my information: Religion has given way to sports, health and culture. The mosques or churches have become schools, clinics, libraries, nurseries or museums.

New statues, new sacred texts: Stalin and Enver Hoxha have driven out God and Muhammad. Lay ceremonies: political education in the place of reading the Koran. The war for production instead of the holy war. What about the crusades, retreats and pilgrimages? One month's work on railroad construction for students, weekends in the country for the townspeople to help in the harvests for the towns, and 3 weeks of annual military training for everyone. And heretics? The revisionists, of course. And then, the revolutionary family ethic praised in the Albanian Workers Party's policy review. Large families must be broken down into one or two households. The youth organizations should develop marriages of love inspired by true motivations: proper attitude with regard to work, to state ownership. Marriages between townspeople and villagers, Muslims and non-Muslims must be encouraged. Cohabitation is punished by 1 year in prison. Candidates for divorce are dissuaded. Contraceptives and abortions are prohibited. In short, the new ethics takes care of everything.

How did the former believers react to the new ethics? I have trouble understanding. What goes on in their minds when faced with a cold and calculating materialism? My meeting with Misto Treska, former Albanian ambassador to Paris, hardly reassures me. When I speak to him of the new ethics, he backs off: "We need it. Our country is isolated and it needs all its strength. So as not to depend on foreigners, the constitution prohibits outside loans."

"But you are accepting a considerable technological delay?"

"Enver Hoxha has said: 'We will eat grass if necessary, but we will maintain our independence.'"

"You forbid cohabitation. Is it immoral to you?"

"We do not want 14-year-old girls running away from home."

"Why the work camps?"

"It seems God has said: 'You will earn your bread with the sweat of your brow.' There I agree with him."

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What a cynic this Misto Treska is! Fortunately, the next day I meet Sherif.

Sherif commits a sacrilege. He has decided to observe Ramadan in our hotel in Durres. He refuses to eat with everyone in the restaurant and takes his dinner upstairs under the dumbfounded gaze of the staff. Sherif is a member of an Algerian scientific delegation. Upon arriving in Tirana, he was convinced that Albania was still a Muslim country. His colleagues brought him up to date. Furious, Sherif decided to put his foot down and to follow the Koran to the letter during his stay. Which upset his guide.

"I don't understand," he complains. "Sherif is a scientist and he observes Ramadan." Sunk in a sofa in the hotel lounge, another Algerian, Rachid, smiles as he watches Sherif do his number: "He's exaggerating. Ramadan is not obligatory when you are traveling. Islam is a very flexible religion."

"You mean to say that Islam can adapt, even in a communist country?"

"Of course," repeats Rachid. "A person could very well be a Muslim and become head of a communist department without anyone noticing."

"But, how?"

"A Muslim must respect five major laws in his life. But he has the right to adapt them if the situation so requires. Prayers, for example. They can all be said together in the evening, even murmured in bed without a motion. Alms? They are only required of the rich. The profession of faith? It is enough to say: 'I recognize the existence of Allah, the one God. Muhammad is his prophet.' The pilgrimage to Mecca? It all depends on the resources of the faithful one. If he doesn't have a penny, he can avoid it. Ramadan? No one can dispense with it, but it can be observed discreetly, unless you lunch at a plant cafeteria."

I am impressed. Islam can therefore survive all repression with no apparent sign. Rachid assures me that it can. In detail: the wearing of the veil is just a custom. The prayer rug merely eliminates discomfort to the knees. Fingers replace a rosary with no problem. The Friday holiday? No problem, it can be reduced to an hour of prayer. Abstaining from alcohol, and circumcision? Just recommended. Ablutions take the place of confession and they can even be performed without water; with a stone, for example. As there is no baptism and two witnesses suffice for marriage, the mosque and hodja can be done without. And, contrary to Christians, Muslims can publicly renounce their faith, as long as they do not renounce it at the bottom of their hearts.

"And pork?"

"Ah, there the prohibition is strict. Except when there is nothing else to eat." With a touch of condescension, Rachid explains to me that a Muslim has the right to marry a woman of another religion. He even has the right to accompany her to religious ceremonies. On the other hand, this is not possible for a Muslim woman. "The reason is simple: We recognize other religions, but other religions do not recognize us."

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"No other obligation or restriction?"

"None. You see, Islam is very tolerant. It is a silent strength." This has been demonstrated. In Albania, as elsewhere, you can very well be an out-and-out Muslim without anyone noticing. As long as you don't violate Ramadan, pork or the marriage of a Muslim woman to a non-Muslim. I consider for a moment the vagaries of religious history. Islam takes over and you have Khomeyni's Iran, his fanatical mullahs, the veiled women, the executions. Islam is forbidden, and I discover a simple religion that anyone can observe without imposing his rituals on others.

Rachid's revelations set me on a new track. Are thousands of Muslims continuing to practice Islam in Albania without the communists noticing? How do I find out?

I gather pounds of newspapers in which "enduring traces" of religion are disparaged. Miscellaneous acts abound. Some grandparents privately confer a second religious name such as Ali or Ahmed on the children instead of sticking to the authorized official names such as Light, Cascade, Spring, or those of Illyrian origin such as Skander. The most cunning disguise religious rites. Instead of a cross, they brandish laurel branches. They celebrate religious holidays as if they were birthdays. Other zealots make rosaries out of olive pits.

At each sign of religious practice, the "people's organizations" of the towns involved are chewed out by the party press. What are they waiting for to develop intelligent atheist propaganda? To explain that pork fat is essential to strong workers and that the Ramadan fasting exhausts your health? "Persuasive efforts" must be made with parents who try to oppose marriages between former Muslim and former Christian families. It is advisable to watch out for certain habits. Such as the use of expressions such as "Please Allah that it may rain." Or visiting cemeteries. Placing flowers on graves is allowed, but not on the days customary to religion.

On the last day of my trip, Allah the Benevolent guides my steps to the Durres beach. Suddenly, my heart skips a beat. There, under an umbrella, Ismail Kadare, the greatest Albanian writer, is relaxing with his family. He refused to participate in Apostrophes (a literary program on French television) so as not to end up next to an American on the platform. Michel Piccoli is making a film based on one of his books, "General of the Dead Army." They are talking about him for a Nobel Prize.

It may seem bizarre to him, but still I confide my concern: Doesn't the bitter struggle against religion deprive the people of a part of their culture? Ismail Kadare rebukes me gently: "But no, Islam was brought to Albania by Turkish invaders. It is logical for us to get rid of it."

"Do you believe that Marxism-Leninism is going to replace Islam?"

"Not entirely. What replaces it is rather the traditional clan ethics, common law, one's word. But we must watch out. Some rules were cruel, such as the vendetta or the right of a man to beat his wife."

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Ismail Kadare obviously doesn't want to talk about religion anymore. So I attack on his territory: "Albanian literature today is exclusively realist. That's a pity, isn't it?"

"You are forgetting our traditional literature. It is rich in epic poetry. Are you familiar with the saga of Skanderberg, the hero of the anti-Turk resistance?"

"You have no more imaginative writers."

"That is true. Since the liberation we do not publish any more imaginative literature. We have other priorities."

Ismail Kadare does not seem to worry about it much. He has no problem with the regime. He travels in France effortlessly. His books sell well. He is nothing like a dissident writer. Besides, there are no dissidents in Albania. Retaliation against those who criticize the party is dreadful. The penal code is very severe. An attempt to flee the country: 10 years in prison. Religious or antisocialist propaganda: 3 to 10 years, or death. Not denouncing an enemy of the people: 10 years. Refusal to work: 2 years. To find out more, I track down Albanian refugees. The few I find refuse to speak. If the party finds out, their relatives in Albania would suffer the consequences. The Vatican stays out of it. Sensible.

The imam of the Albanian mosque in Brussels? When the communists came to power, he was studying in Cairo and he has not been back to Albania since. He therefore had not verified for himself what he told me: Great dignitaries executed, imams forced to eat pork in prisons and, on the other hand, high officials who would have paid a foreign student to give their children a religious education.

What about Amnesty International, to whom the Albanian Government refuses to reply? It has little information: "Several cases of persons sentenced to serve up to 6 years in prison for listening to foreign radio. A group of Orthodox priests defrocked in public and forcibly shaved. If one of them had protested, he would have been sentenced to 8 years for 'agitation against the state.' Three bishops disappeared after having conducted religious ceremonies in private. Tens of thousands of political prisoners in labor camps such as the Spaci copper mines."

After weeks of research, I finally succeed in meeting with a recent refugee in a small town in Switzerland. This former worker had fled to Italy through Montenegro and Yugoslavia. According to him, the battle against Islam was fought in blood, through massive executions and systematic imprisonment of priests: "In the 60's, any youth who frequented a mosque or church was called before a meeting of the Youth Union. He had to give an explanation and undergo hours of mass criticism. If he returned to see a priest, he was expelled from the union and tagged 'undesirable.' 'Undesirables' in Albania do not enjoy themselves. A technician immediately finds himself a sweeper. A barber friend circumcised a child. Penalty: 9 years in prison. A worker who was listening to Vatican Radio: 5 years. Besides, in 1970 the

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government dismantled antennas which were capable of getting Italian television to combat its influence on the minds of the young."

"The young began to wear bell bottom trousers, to let their hair grow, to like rock and pop music. Now people fabricate indoor television antennas which they dismantle when they have visitors so as not to be reported."

This is strange: Italian television was broadcast in Tirana every evening from 8 to 8:30 pm. But perhaps only loyal party members are allowed to have antennas capable of receiving these broadcasts. Even in this case, the Albanians jam anything religious or pornographic. Sometimes they are wrong. They jam a sequence on a lawyer's meeting. The lawyers' robes made them look like priests. They let a Vietnamese priest speak: Impossible for an oriental to be a priest.

"Authorities do not hesitate to interrogate children in school to identify practicing families. The questions are sly: 'What holidays do you celebrate as a family?' and, the day after a religious holiday, 'What did you have to eat last night?'" It doesn't take much to be called before the police. One story among others. One day, a peasant had to give his two cattle to the cooperative. The next day he is called to the police station.

"So, you are criticizing the party?"

"Never in my life!"

"No use denying it, the cattle told us everything."

You can be sentenced for a dream. This is what happened to a guy who told his neighbor he had dreamed about troops landing in Albania. The neighbor rushed to the police. The guy got 7 years. I no longer know where I am, between a dream and a nightmare, the courage of the believers and my distrust of Islam. I collapse into convulsive fits of laughter as though possessed by the devil when I discover that Albania is the only country which approved of the taking of the hostages in the American Embassy in Tehran.

Too much, it's too much. For months, Albanian newspapers have been praising the Iranian revolution without mentioning the ayatollahs, with phrases such as "Tomorrow, on the pedestals of the statues of the shah, there will be statues of the proletariat and the peasants." Albania and Iran have even exchanged delegations. The Albanians have stated that they are delighted with Iran's anti-imperialist struggle. And the Iranian deputy prime minister: "I admire the purity of cultural life in Albania where you do not see cabarets, night clubs, extravagant clothes or other extravagant things anywhere."

They are all definitely too much.

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GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

DIARY, SUICIDE OF SED FUNCTIONARY'S DAUGHTER DISCUSSED

Hamburg STERN in German Vol 35 No 12, 18 Mar 82 pp 256, 258, 259

[Article by Dieter Bub: "GDR: Suicide in Socialism--At Age 18 the Daughter of an SED Functionary Departed This Life. Her Diary Is Now Being Published in the West"--"Flucht in die Wolken" (Escape Into the Clouds) by Sybille Muthesius, published by Fischer-Verlag, FRG; 422 pages DM 48.00]

[Text] When the book came out in the GDR it was out of print within a few days. Eager readers are now looking for it through newspaper ads. The bestseller is authentic--the diary of a girl who at age 18 committed suicide in socialist Germany. "Flight Into the Clouds," the story of Pony, will also appear in the FRG at the beginning of April. [See above]

As a child in a privileged family 12-year-old Pony has ballet lessons, travels with her parents and older sister Maja to Hungary, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union. She lives in a Berlin suburb in a splendid villa dating from the 1920's with a big garden. Diary entry about a Sunday excursion: "We have a new car, really neat. Also a Wartburg, but deluxe. Real small wheels at the bottom. In the middle a really swell wine red. The top is black and can be opened. Goes up to 150. Really neat! Daddy really opens it up." The father, a communist since his youth, a respected member of the SED, believes in the structure of socialism and enjoys the privileges which the party offers him. The family can satisfy almost every wish it and Pony have. Like her father, the girl believes in the triumph of socialism, feels sorry for the young people in the capitalist West and wants to help children in the Third World. The GDR idyll is spoiled only by the father's occasional extramarital affairs which are not even hidden from the children.

Pony's tragedy begins at age 16. After a vacation in Bulgaria with her parents and her friend Peer, she senses the miseries of everyday life. The beloved boy starts a 4-year course of study in the very remote Ilmenau, and at school Pony has to cram for a grade average of 1.2. That is the only way she will have a chance for a place to study psychology.

One day during a physics class she cowers in the dark corner of the laboratory with a fixed stare. The family doctor is helpless and advises psychiatric treatment. The girl is taken to a mental hospital, released, readmitted, has electric shock treatments, returns home, suffers from school stress. The

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mother says: "A grade of '4' is like a death sentence for her!" Meanwhile Pony wants to go to acting school, but is rejected on the admission examination. Her self-confidence is destroyed and her love for Peer is now under suspicion by her parents. The authoritarian father and the doctors claim to have discovered the cause of Pony's suffering in her relation to the gentle boy. They prevent a holiday together and a meeting in Budapest.

When the mother recognizes the mistake and brings the two together in Berlin it is too late. The distraught girl leaves her beloved and tries to run to the West through the Brandenburg Gate in the pouring rain. She is arrested, interrogated and put back under psychiatric care. In the "bunker," a solitary cell, the thought of suicide develops from her yearning for death. Following her return to normal life her parents get her a room in Berlin and try to obtain a training opening. One Sunday, the father went on a short recreation leave and the mother to a symposium on social policy, the 18-year-old turns on the gas cock.

The diary depicts the life and suffering of a child in the socialist achievement society. What counts are first class grades and school work. What Pony is lacking are love and security. At age 11 she confided to her diary: "Daddy always says that we are to come to him if something is wrong, but when? I find that horrible!" She desires time with her parents and harmony: "Daddy and mommy should kiss each other once! Love, love, I love. That is why I was in three medical prisons."

Pony's report, illustrated with her drawings, oil paintings and collages, also reveals the misery of psychiatry in the GDR which for decades rejected Freud as bourgeois and had no new findings of its own to offer. Neurotics were committed and sedated with drugs, but they were not treated with therapy.

In the regimented everyday life in the GDR, which tries to narrow the personal development potential of children and young people to a minimum, squeezed into petty bourgeois socialist values, many young people see suicide as the only way out. Pony's fate is not a unique incident, GDR doctors unofficially speak of a frightening increase in the number of suicides by young people.

Pony's mother, a costume designer with the state film society [German Film Corporation], views her daughter's fate differently. She believes that puberty neuroses promoted the girl's narcissism and her increasingly more vigorous desire for unregulated self-realization. "At this point we encounter frustrations which socially are diverse. In the FRG it is anxiety which can lead to aggressiveness or drugs, in our case it is primarily the unquenchable yearning for faraway places."

The mother, who compiled Pony's diary, letters and poems into a book and supplemented them with her own descriptions, said to STERN: "At the time we really ought not to have put our child with her psychic illness into the clinic, that way we would have spared her the fear of the fate of the other patients. Perhaps we could have helped her then."

Perhaps.

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GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

ESCAPE ATTEMPT BY NEPHEW OF INTELLIGENCE CHIEF RECOUNTED

Hamburg STERN in German Vol 35 No 15, 7 Apr 82 p 228

[Article by Joerg von Duehren and Dieter Bub: "GDR: The Embarrassing Escape Attempt by Oleg Wolf—The Nephew of the Chief of State Security Was Arrested in Hungary While Planning to Follow His Girlfriend to the West"]

[Text] The young man took the train from East Berlin to Budapest. In the Hungarian capital he mounted a bicycle and started pedaling, with tent and sleeping bag, to the Yugoslav border. He had just finished erecting his tent at a camping ground when the Hungarian security police arrived and arrested him. That happened in July of last year.

For the government informers who keep camp grounds and roads leading to border areas under surveillance, there was no doubt: the 23-year-old citizen of the GDR planned to defect. But then the case became sensitive. The arrested man's name was Oleg Wolf; he was the son of the Chairman of the Academy of the Arts of the GDR, Konrad Wolf, who died in early March, and the nephew of Mischa Wolf, the deputy chief of the State Security Service.

The young communist's escape attempt was a unique occurrence in the history of the GDR. While several times in the past offspring of prominent GDR functionaries had departed the socialist fatherland, this had never before involved the top leadership of the secret service.

Oleg Wolf was flown in a special aircraft to Berlin-Schoenefeld and delivered to the detention center of the state security service in Borkumstrasse. This jail is reserved for aggravated cases of aid to escapees, escape attempts involving force of arms and for "prominent persons." As a rule, escapees are condemned to jail sentences ranging from 1 and 1/2 to 4 years after a period of 3 months detention pending trial. Oleg Wolf was spared from this fate after receiving a good talking to by his uncle and his father. Four months later he was set free.

After attending a 10-year secondary school, the 23-year-old V.I.P. offspring had completed training as a mechanic. Thereafter he worked at Berlin's Charite hospital as a medical technician and studied at night to pass his graduating examination. He wanted to become a physician.

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Oleg Wolf is a member of the Free German Youth (FDJ), but has not been particularly active in it. While he expressed criticism of conditions in the GDR in talks with his friends, he was not a member of the underground. Oleg had wanted to study in France or Switzerland and eventually to work as a physician in developed countries. He had a good relationship with his parents. On occasion he met with Uncle Mischa, about whom he said that one could discuss anything with him.

In 1980 Oleg made the acquaintance of 17-year old Heike Behrend, who moved in with him shortly thereafter. The girl had left her apprenticeship just prior to that time. Being without employ, Heike was considered an "antisocial element." Her personal identification papers were confiscated. She had to report to the police once a week. She decided to escape. Oleg wanted to stay behind. During the night of 25-26 April of last year Heike climbed over the wall at Spandau at 0143 hours. When she was spotted, the border guards in a watchtower opened fire on her. The shots missed.

Once in West Berlin the girl realized that she was pregnant. After Heike's successful escape Oleg decided to follow her. After his unsuccessful escape attempt in Hungary, members of the state security service suggested to Heike Behrend that she return to East Berlin. They promised her immunity from prosecution and assistance in making a new start in the GDR.

During the middle of October Heike Behrend returned to the GDR via the Friedrichstrasse rail station. She moved in with Oleg for the second time and became the mother of a boy in December. But soon there were arguments. Heike moved to an apartment which had been procured for her by the state security service.

Oleg is once more working as a medical technician at the Charite. But his life has changed. His former friends with whom he had visited night spots and discotheques are avoiding him. They fear that he may have bought his freedom in return for cooperating with the state security service.

At his father's funeral Oleg was standing next to his uncle of the secret service. On that occasion, Mischa Wolf had his picture taken along with his family not only by GDR television, but also by STERN photographer Harald Schmitt. There is an explanation for such publicity: Mischa Wolf, 59, is in line to succeed 74-year-old Erich Mielke as Minister for State Security. And as a minister he would not be able to avoid public appearances anyway.

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